

DRAFT

Build-up of Vietnamese Communist Forces Continues
After Resumption of Air Attacks

Summary

Since the resumption on 31 January of the US air attacks against North Vietnam, the North Vietnamese have shown no weakening of their determination to maintain the flow of men and supplies into South Vietnam. Hanoi radio in recent broadcasts has pledged its all out support to the revolution in South Vietnam. Private statements of the North Vietnamese leaders indicate a willingness and ability to support the war in South Vietnam for 20 to 30 years, if necessary.

The infiltration of PAVN forces continues.

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the total number of confirmed PAVN

personnel in South Vietnam will be slightly over 17,000 by the end of March. The DRV has an apparent capability of training and infiltrating some 50,000 men annually or the equivalent of 36 regiments, Without impairing the strength of its armed forces in North Vietnam.

There has been a decline in the aggressiveness of Communist military forces since the end of 1965. Although the total number of armies attacks increased by 22 percent from December to January the number of large scale Communist attacks has been declining. Regimental strength attacks declined from 4 in November to 1 in December and none in January. Battallion-strength attacks declined from 8

in November and 7 in December to 3 in January. Recent Allied operations have disrupted Communist planning and thrown Communist forces off balance and made it increasingly difficult for them to mount mass surprise attacks.

There has been little abatement of the logistic build-up since the resumption of the air attacks. Although daylight activity has been reduced repair and construction programs continues at a high rate. At least 80,000 workers are involved in the maintenance of lines of communication in military Region IV. The productivity of these workers has been increased by the introduction of large amounts of equipment and construction materials. At least two new roads are under construction in MR IV. An intensified effort to improve inland waterways and canals is also underway. Intensive reconstruction activity is also taking place in Laos. New road construction in Laos centers on the construction of a third bypass around the Mu Gia Pass choke point, the possible construction of a new border crossing point south of Mu Gia Pass, and the improvement of roads and trails further south near the border of South Vietnam.

The Communists used the bombing pause to increase the flow of supplies through Laos to South Vietnam. In spite of the renewed air attacks they have been able to maintain this increased flow of supplies. Supplies moving into MR IV in January and February appear to be at the high levels noted in the last quarter of 1965. There is apparently a continuing high priority in the use of inland water transport and ~~an~~ an increasing use of coastal water transport. Truck traffic through

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Laos both during and since the bombing pause has been almost twice the level of the same period a year ago. From 70-90 tons per day has been moved into Laos in January and February compared with an average of 35 tons per day during the 1965 dry season. Road watch reports in February indicate increasing use of the Mu Gia bypass rather than route ^{12/13} 23 as the main route for this traffic.

Some 50-70 tons of the supplies being moved daily into Laos probably are moved forward to South Vietnam. This amount is far in excess of present VC/PAVN requirements of some 12 tons per day. It is adequate to support both a substantial build-up of VC/PAVN forces and an intensification of combat, or to make significant additions to stockpiles in South Vietnam.

[REDACTED] confirm the use of Cambodian territory as a base and sanctuary area and as an infiltration route. At least 6 way stations have been identified along an apparent infiltration route in Cambodia. Photography also seems to confirm prisoner reports of Communist warehouses and installations associated with PAVN infiltration and logistic operations.

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